In the Specification

Please substitute the following "Related Applications" on page 1, beginning at line 2, which was added by Preliminary Amendment on February 5, 2002:

This application is a divisional application of U.S. Serial No. 09/485,316, filed February 4, 2000, now U.S. Patent No. 6,344,441, which claimed priority under 35 U.S.C. §371 to PCT/IB98/01256, filed August 6, 1998, which claimed priority on French Patent Application No. 97 10088, filed August 6, 1997, and to Application No. 98 05032, filed April 22, 1998, the entire disclosures of which are incorporated herein by reference.

Please substitute the following paragraph on page 25, beginning at line 3:

Standard laboratory procedures were used to isolate RNA from adipose tissue that had been obtained from C57BL/6J mice. Poly(A)$^+$ mRNA was captured using oligo-dT coated magnetic beads according to the manufacturer's instructions (Dynal, France). The mRNA was reverse transcribed into cDNA using SUPERSCRIPT reverse transcriptase and reagents that were purchased as a kit (Life Technologies, France). cDNA encoding AdipoQ was amplified in a standard PCR protocol using oligonucleotide primers having the sequences: CTACATGGATCCAGTCATGCCGAAGAT (SEQ ID NO:5), and CGACAACTCGAGTCAGTTGGTATCATGG (SEQ ID NO:6). This procedure selectively amplified polynucleotide sequences downstream of the putative signal sequence located at the 5' end of the AdipoQ coding region. The amplified cDNA was digested with BamHI and XhoI restriction endonucleases and the digestion products ligated into the corresponding sites of the pTRC His B expression vector (Invitrogen, France). This vector has been engineered to permit expression of heterologous sequences downstream of a polypeptide domain which includes a hexahistidine peptide motif, an enterokinase cleavage site and an epitope that is recognized by an ~~Anti-Xpress™~~ ANTI-XPRESS antibody. Following transformation of competent DH5-α E. coli, bacterial clones harboring the polynucleotide encoding AdipoQ were selected by growth in the presence of ampicillin. Plasmid DNA was isolated from one of the bacterial clones and the sequence of the heterologous DNA insert determined. The sequence of the insert was found to correspond to bases 57 - 762 of AdipoQ (Genebank accession No. U49915). The cloned polynucleotide sequence

also corresponded to bases 86-791 of the sequence encoding Acrp30 (GeneBank accession No. U37222), except for nucleotide position 382. The polynucleotide sequence encoding Acrp 30 has an adenosine residue at this position while the AdipoQ polynucleotide has a guanine residue at the corresponding position. This nucleotide substitution leads to an amino acid change from a methionine in Acrp30 to a valine in AdipoQ.

Please substitute the following paragraph on page 42, beginning at line 29 through to page 43, line 6:

Alternatively, molecules capable of binding to the γ subunit may be identified using two-hybrid systems such as the ~~Matchmaker~~ MATCHMAKER Two Hybrid System 2 (Catalog No. K1604-1, Clontech). As described in the manual accompanying the ~~Matchmaker~~ MATCHMAKER Two Hybrid System 2 (Catalog No. K1604-1, Clontech), which is incorporated herein by reference, nucleic acids encoding the γ subunit, a fragment thereof, or a fragment comprising the C1q, AdipoQ or ApM1 binding site are inserted into an expression vector such that they are in frame with DNA encoding the DNA binding domain of the yeast transcriptional activator GAL4. Nucleic acids in a library which encode proteins or peptides which might interact with the γ subunit, a fragment of the γ subunit, or the C1q, AdipoQ or ApM1 binding site are inserted into a second expression vector such that they are in frame with DNA encoding the activation domain of CAL4. The two expression plasmids are transformed into yeast and the yeast are plated on selection medium which selects for expression of selectable markers on each of the expression vectors as well as GAL4 dependent expression of the HIS3 gene. Transformants capable of growing on medium lacking histidine are screened for GAL4 dependent lacZ expression. Those cells which are positive in both the histidine selection and the lacZ assay contain plasmids encoding proteins or peptides which interact with the γ subunit, a fragment thereof, or the C1q, AdipoQ or ApM1 binding site.